



Comparative Analysis of the Core Values among Different Groups of Chinese People

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Abstract

Values are principles that guide people’s behavior. Values are formed by life experiences influenced by one’s family, school, culture, and society. Some values are universal and others are culturally distinct.

This project intends to examine if people change their values as they go through different stages of life, especially for students who grew up in China and come to American universities for education. Do they keep their values intact or do their values change? If their values change, in what areas do those changes occur and to what degree do they occur? This project studies the values held by Chinese students in China, Chinese students studying in the United States, and students of Chinese origin.

Research Method

A survey is conducted among three groups of students:

1. Chinese students studying in China
2. Chinese students studying in the United States
3. People who grew up in China, attended college in the United States and now live and work in the United States

Preliminary Findings

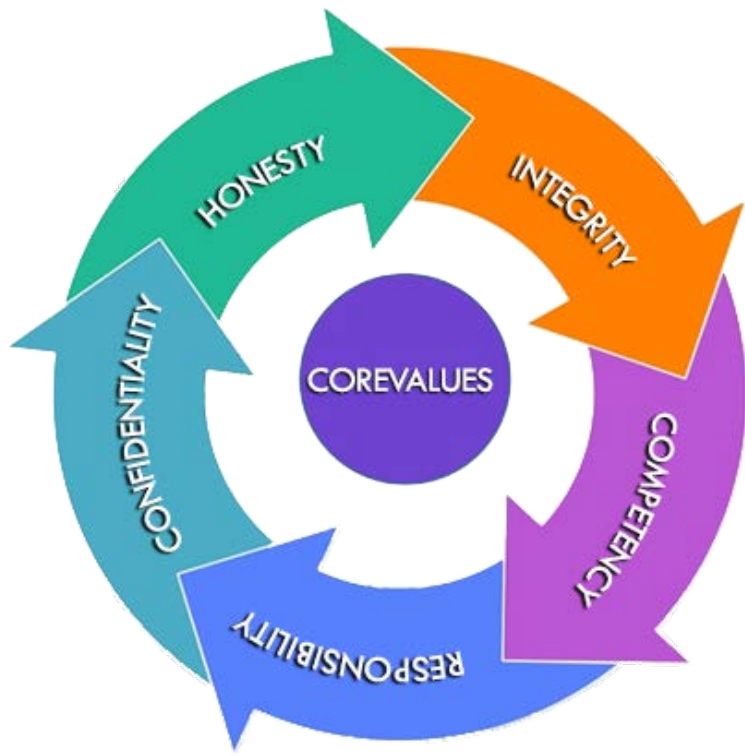
Both groups agree with the following statements, but compared to the overseas Chinese, students in China more strongly agree with these statements:

1. It is children’s obligation to take care of their parents
2. Determination and perseverance are the most important characteristics for success.
3. The government should take more responsibility for the people.
4. People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves.
5. Democracy is important to a country.
6. Each country is unique and should have its own core values

Sample Size

A total of 424 individuals surveyed.

Core Values



Chinese students studying in the U.S. consider the following as more important than students in China.

1. I do not want drug addicts live in my neighborhood.
2. Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.

Hypotheses

H1: Chinese students in China tend to hold loyalty, filial piety, and patriotism highly.

H2: Chinese students studying in the U.S. tend to hold diligence and discipline highly.

H3: Chinese students studying in the U.S. tend to hold both Chinese values and Western values. However their Chinese values are not held as highly as Chinese students in China and their Western values are not held as highly as students of Chinese origin.

H4: Students of Chinese origin tend to hold independence, individuality, freedom, equality, and democracy highly.

Values Studied

The values studied by this project include the following:

Filial piety, diligence, discipline, selflessness, ultraism, philanthropy, patriotism, nationalism, loyalty, independence, individuality, freedom, equality, fairness, liberty, democracy, honesty, and integrity.



Conclusion

This study shows that there are differences in values between the two groups. Compared to Chinese students studying in the U.S., students in China tend to value filial piety more highly, consider determination and perseverance as the most important characteristics for success, and favor government taking more responsibilities for its people.

The most interesting finding is students in China more than Chinese students studying in the U.S. consider democracy is important to a country.

These differences indicate that getting an education in the United States does influence people’s values.